



# Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

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630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

MURRAY HILL 6-0710

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Archbishop Torkom Manougian, Primate

Առաջնորդ

## DIOCESAN AUXILIARY COMMITTEE

October 23, 1969

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Gentlemen,

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Please announce the following special event of  
our Diocesan Auxiliary:

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THE ANNUAL Cultural event sponsored by the Diocesan

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ANDREW SHAHINIAN

MRS. AKABY VARTABEDIAN

is the Gomidas Centennial Concert featuring a new all-

Armenian Quartet and Mme. Astghig Dedeyan, soprano,

which will take place on November 2, 1969, at 2:30 p.m.,

at the Kavookjian Auditorium, Second Ave. and 35th

Street, New York, New York. Tickets are available thru

Auxiliary members or at the door.

Thank you in advance for using this announcement in your  
programming.

Very truly yours,

*Vehig S. Tavitian*  
(Miss) Vehig S. Tavitian  
Publicity Committee

From: Diocese of the Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For the first time in the United States, an all-Armenian string quartet has been formed. Under the aegis of the Diocesan Auxiliary Committee of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, which annually sponsors a special cultural program for the metropolitan area Armenian community, Harry Zaratzian --world-famed violist -- was asked to form an all-Armenian string ensemble especially for the Gomidas Centennial Concert.

The result of Mr. Zaratzian's many consultations, auditions, and concert date commitments has brought together the talents of: Vartan Manoogian, 1st violin; Anni Kafavian, 2nd violin; Harry Zaratzian, viola; and Gabriel Anton, violoncello.

Mr. Zaratzian's reputation as a distinguished violist has preceded him wherever he has gone -- Europe, Russia, Japan, Alaska, the Middle East, South America. A graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music and awarded a Fellowship at Julliard, Mr. Zaratzian was chosen by the late Maestro Bruno Walter in 1947 to become a member of the New York Philharmonic. His later appointment as solo violist of the Philadelphia Orchestra by Eugene Ormandy was the beginning of a long list of solo appearances with the country's leading orchestras. His contributions to the chamber music field include performances with the Kroll Quartet, the New York String Trio, Quintetto Chigiano, and the Albeneri Trio. For the past 12 years, he has been a faculty member of Rudolf Serkin's Marlboro (Vt.) Festival, appearing in concerts and coaching chamber music classes.

Mme. Astghig Dedeyan, as other native American artists, has earned her reputation in Europe. Her musical talents started at an early age and culminated at the New England Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Professor Gladys Miller.

An opportunity to attend the Gomidas Conservatory of Music in Erivan, Armenia, was irresistible and the young soprano completed the five-year course with honors and prizes in 1966. Under Professor Tamara Shahnazarian's guidance, her voice gained even greater brilliance. Her solo recitals, and as Violetta in "La Traviata" at the Spondiarian Opera House brought her acclaim.

Continuing her studies at the Paris Conservatory with Mme. Janine Michaud, and in Milan, Italy, increased her operatic roles to more than twenty in seven languages.

Mme. Dedeyan has appeared at the Bordeaux Grand Theatre as Desdemona in "Othello", as Mimi in "La Boheme", and as Melisande in "Ariane et Barbe-Bleue". In addition, she has recorded broadcasts BBC Radio as well as the music of Armenian composers for USSR radio.

Gomidas Vartabed, born in 1869 in Keotahia, Anatolia), and to whom the Concert is dedicated, was a well-known musician of great talent. Baptized Soghomon Soghomonian, he lost his parents at a very early age. He studied at the Kevorkian Seminary of Etchmiadzin, where he was ordained a celibate priest. Because of his lyric voice as well as his interest in and devotion to pure Armenian music, his fame spread.

In order to enrich his musical talent, he studied in Berlin (Germany) from 1896 through 1899. During that time, he lectured on, wrote, and taught music. Great was Gomidas Vartabed's role in introducing Armenian music to the world. Beginning in 1905, he was the conductor of many concerts. After much research, he set down many Armenian folk songs. In addition to his compositions and songs, he spent a great deal of time in composing the Divine Liturgy as well as other sacred songs. He introduced a major change in Armenian sacred music by instilling the purely Armenian strains, which bring a greater sense of glory to the worship service. He might well be called the Father of Pure Armenian Music, so exacting was he in keeping out any foreign elements. In any case, Gomidas Vartabed was a wellspring of classic and classical Armenian music.

After a lengthy illness brought on by the Genocide of the Armenians at the hands of the Turks, Gomidas Vartabed died in 1935 in Paris. His body was returned to and interred in his beloved homeland of Armenia.

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